**IT Applications**

**Onscreen design elements, p 233**

Onscreen solutions need to be carefully designed to create user-friendly onscreen productions.

From pg 234 complete the following in relation to the design elements to consider.

1. Proportion
   1. What is meant by the hierarchy of a page?

The hierarchy of a page is order of importance/prominence of which that being displayed is portrayed as. Ie where our eyes are drawn and the order.

* 1. What factors affect the visual hierarchy of a screen?

Many factors work to affect the implied visual hierarchy of a screen with proportion of images and text as one such way to achieve this. As mentioned it is however not the only way with similarly order in which items load, contrast, figure ground to name but a few. This is as it assist in the process of emphasising items to suit our minds when combined.

1. Orientation
   1. What does orientation refer to?

Orientation in its purest definition refers to the direction and aspect of elements of an onscreen page.

* 1. List some typical considerations for orientation of screen elements.

Some common considerations for orientation of screen elements include;

* The intended visual hierarchy to be formed
* The aspect of each object on screen in relation to each other
* Pointing from one object to the next in visual hierarchy (the line the eyes follow)
* How text is aligned
* Intended size of screen for which items must fit effectively (there may be a default it relies on) and hence providing a clear and viewable solution no matter what the screen size.
* Having a effective juxtaposition if required

1. Clarity and consistency
   1. What does clarity refer to?

Clarity refers to how clearly the information on a screen is presented and hence how well a user can distinguish between the visual elements.

* 1. List characteristics of a clear screen.

Characteristics of a clear screen include;

* Minimising the use of superfluous information, or using it with clear direction and emphasis on the needed information to ensure it is easy for users to find required information.
* Effective and clear fonts styles with appropriate sizes being used
* Resolution of graphics and hence understandability of the image and intended reason.
  1. What is meant by consistency?

Consistency is the use of similar or repeated features on a screen to improve the degree of predictability hence ensuring it has a ease of use in relation to navigation and resultant minimisation of confusion.

* 1. List elements that can be used to support the consistency of an onscreen document.
* Company logos
* Effective headers and footers
* Font and/or numbering styles and sizes
* Search fields and navigational icons or frames
* Potentially the application of colour schemes for features

1. Colour and contrast
   1. What are the conventions for onscreen colours.

Common conventions for onscreen colours include;

* Use of easy to read colour combinations such as black on white
* Similarly colours that don’t put colour-blind people at a disadvantage such avoiding green and red together.
* Limit to minimal amount of colours being displayed on a screen
* Using light or pastel shades as background with the avoidance of bright/vivid colours unless for emphasis
* Hyperlinks being coloured as blue for unvisited and purple once visited or if you must following a consistent equivalent to ensure people don’t get lost at where they’ve been.
  1. What is the role of whitespace in assisting the contrast in an onscreen product?

Whitespace assists in the creation of contrast in an onscreen product by leaving a clean uncluttered or atheistically different appearance compared to the item being compared ie text.

**Characteristics of onscreen solutions: efficient and effective user interfaces, p 238**

1. What is the user interface?

A user interface is the point at which a user interacts with an information system with it being split into 2 elements. software such as the OS, and hardware such as a keypad

In addition to the design elements already considered high quality user interfaces need to consider the following:

1. Usability and accessibility
   1. What is meant by usability?

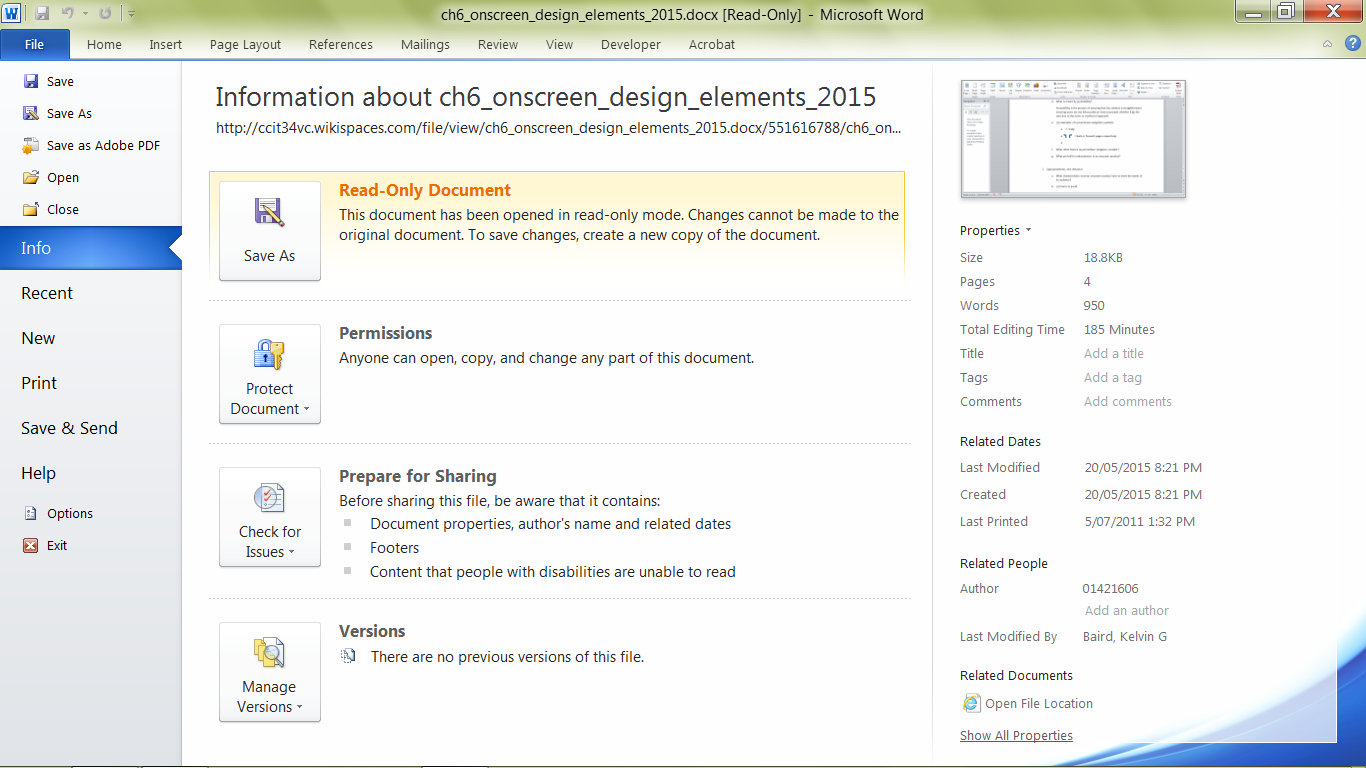
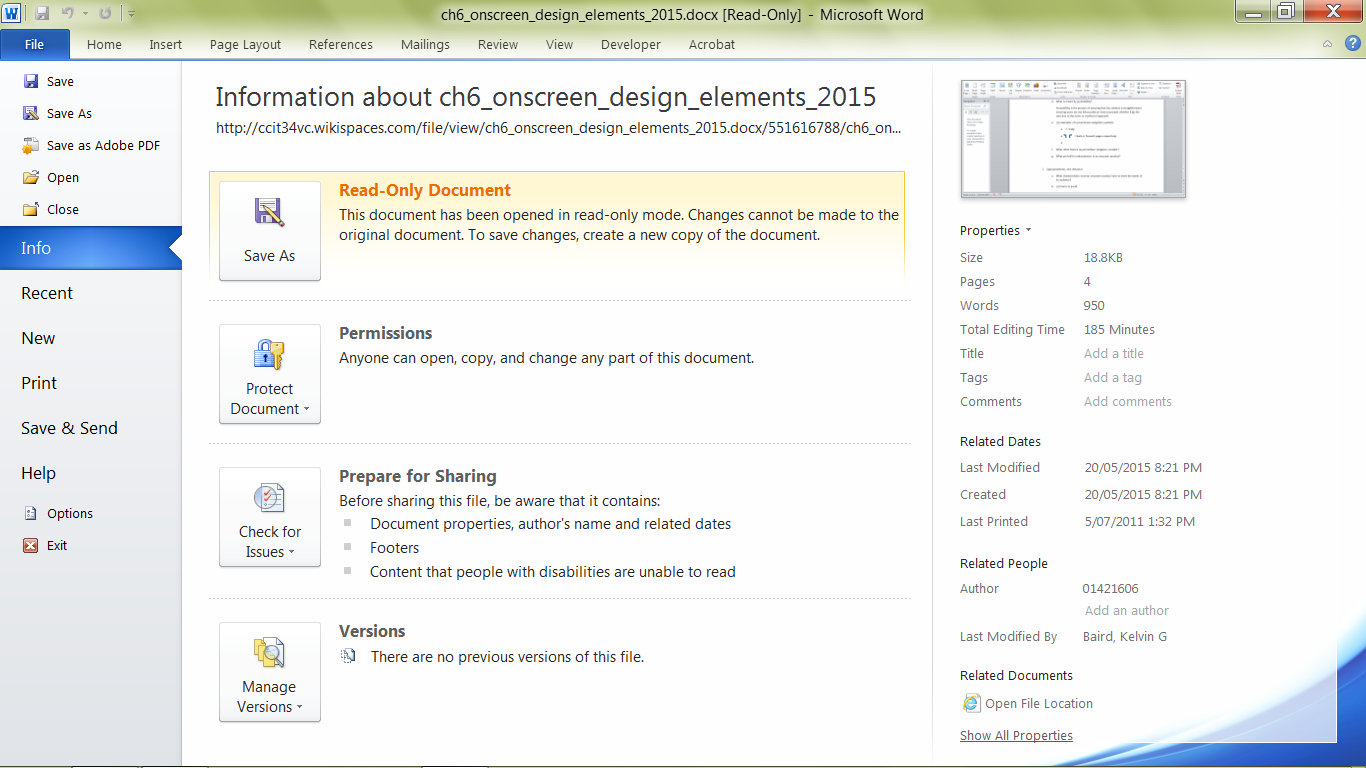
Usability is how ‘transparent’ the user interface is to the user, or in other words how close it is to being initiative to the user.

* 1. List some factors that contribute to increased usability.
* Being thoroughly planned and logical in manner
* Keep to functionality over beauty or elaborateness, minimise the use of superfluous parts or functions to ensure clear direction
* Option to turn off popups, hints or the likes to prevent a disjointed experience
* Following a template and standard method of approach and navigation to ensure things are located where expected to be situated by the user.
* Avoid horizontal scrolling and minimise vertical
  1. Which fonts are used for headings and body of document?

Serif fonts (tailed) should be used in the body or other similarly blocks of text to ensure a high ease of readability is maintained due to their continuing nature directing the reader while San-Serif fonts (non-tailed) should be used for headings as it provides impact and hence contrast elevating its hierarchy level.

* 1. What is meant by accessibility?

Accessibility is the process of ensuring that the solution is straightforward ensuring users are not left puzzled on how to proceed whether it be the case due to the icons, or method of approach.

* 1. List examples of conventional navigation symbols.
* ? = help
* = back or forward pages respectively
* 
*  trusty floppy disk for save
* ect
  1. What other factors must interface designers consider?

Common factors to consider in regards to interfaces include minimising the use of specifics (heavy internet or processing features, Screens, control methods or programs) as not all users will have as good or any at all. Likewise all that is included and the point that navigation leads to should be relevant and understandable.

* 1. What are built in redundancies in an onscreen product?

Built in redundancies refers to building extra items that are not strictly necessary for something to function such as backups, however provide alternative should one method fail.

1. Appropriateness and relevance.
   1. What characteristics must an onscreen product have to meet the needs of its audience?

For an onscreen product to meet the needs of its audience it must provide accurate information that is relevant to the situation or purpose in a timely manner. This hence providing a streamlined and functional interface. Similarly given the users of the product are likely humans, methods should be employed to recognise a typo while still providing the required information.

* 1. List items to avoid.
* Jargon or technical language should be avoided unless a higher feature
* Showing off ‘bag of tricks’ functions that are irrelevant or confusing in use here.
* Unclear explainations

**Characteristics of onscreen solutions: Characteristics of effective information architecture.**

1. What does information architecture refer to?

Information architecture refers to the way of which the information is structured and the way that it is to be navigated by the user. Ie buttons or search fields ect